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TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: James A. Noyes
Director of Public Works

THE SAN GABRIEL AND LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY OPEN SPACE PLAN - MAY 14, 2002, AGENDA ITEM NO. 68

In October 1999, Governor Davis signed AB1355 (Havice) and SB216 (Solis) into law establishing the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy (RMC). The Conservancy area includes portions of Los Angeles and Orange County. The County is represented on the governing board of the Conservancy.

The legislature charged the Conservancy with developing a parkway and open space plan to establish policies and priorities without infringing on water quality, water supply, and necessary flood control. The plan, titled "Common Ground from the Mountains to the Sea: San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers Watershed and Open Space Plan," describes the history and current condition of the watersheds and then lays out a vision, guiding principles, strategies, and opportunities for future development.

The plan recognizes the importance and validity of both natural and manmade systems in our region. The plan's guiding principles are to grow a greener Southern California, enhance waters and waterways, and plan together to make it happen. The plan identifies six strategies for implementing open space and watershed enhancements: education; partnerships; funding; multiple-objective planning; management of public lands; and monitoring and assessment. The plan further discusses opportunities within the watersheds upon which the conservancy can capitalize. These opportunities are in the areas of land acquisition, connectivity and open space, public access, native plants and wildlife, and water resources.

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The draft plan was circulated for comments to the cities, the Central Basin Water Association, the San Gabriel Valley Watermaster, and other interested organizations. The plan provides an approach to future improvements in the region but does not adopt specific projects or impose specific obligations or development plans. The plan includes a legal opinion affirming that its adoption will not interfere with the authority of any city to regulate land use within its boundaries, and there is no requirement that an entity amend its General Plan to conform with the Open Space Plan.

The plan was approved by the RMC on October 17, 2001. The RMC is required to seek adoption of the plan by enough cities to represent a majority of the population in the Conservancy area, your Board, the Central Basin Water Association, and the San Gabriel Valley Watermaster. To date, 49 cities have adopted this Open Space Plan, and seven cities will place the plan on their city council agenda for May 2002. The City of Diamond Bar adopted a resolution to oppose the plan, and the City of Industry passed a resolution rescinding its adoption of the plan. The remaining cities are continuing to review the plan.

The San Gabriel Valley Watermaster and Central Basin Water Association have neither approved or opposed the plan. Consequently, the RMC is working with these water agencies to develop an addendum to the Open Space Plan that will address their water- related concerns.

The plan is on the May 14, 2002, Board Agenda for adoption. Adoption of the plan will bring significant State dollars into the region for open space, environmental education, water quality, and habitat restoration projects that are consistent with the plan. Current potential funding opportunities are Propositions 12 and 40. There is \$40 million of Proposition 40 funds already earmarked for RMC use.

If you have any questions, please contact me or your staff may contact Don Wolfe, Assistant Director, at (626) 458-4014.

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cc: Chief Administrative Office
Executive Office

bc: Don Wolfe
Watershed Management